

Rationale for Training Portfolio

Portfolio Title: A Hard Day's Night

Grade: 12

Year Released: 2008

Reflective Entry Title: Letter to Mrs. E_____

3 Content (3, 2, 3)

The writing establishes the authentic focused purpose of explaining the writer's progression of literacy skills since third grade. The focus is narrowed to a specific discussion of "The Adventures of Laundry Man" and the letter continues developing this focus throughout the writing. Although the writer addresses a specific audience (Mrs. E____), some of the information in the reflective letter does seem addressed to that specific audience. Details included in the letter (e.g., Laundry Man, magazine reading, broadcast media class) provide sufficient idea development. While the writer applies characteristics of the letter genre (e.g., a salutation and closing), the writing does not always address the intended audience; therefore, some of the characteristics of the letter genre are not completely evident. The idea development, however, is sufficient enough to earn an indicator score of 3 for idea development. The letter appropriately reflects the voice of the writer.

3 Structure (3, 3, 3)

The writing demonstrates logical, coherent organization with effective transitional elements throughout. (e.g., "When we had a list...", "Another advancement...", "Beginning with keyboarding..."). The writing demonstrates the use of a variety of sentence structures.

3 Conventions (3, 3, 3)

Though not without errors, this letter demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and correctness. The word choice is acceptable and effective throughout (e.g., "forge a cogent argument," "my literary holy grail," "charisma").

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample during instruction to address such issues as:

- How the choice of audience choice seems slightly contrived causing some extraneous details. The audience of any piece for publication should be authentic. Teachers may ask students to consider whether this piece would have been more effective as a personal essay.
- The successful use of commas with introductory clauses.

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Personal OR Literary Entry Title: A Hard Day's Night

3 Content (3, 3, 3)

The writing establishes and maintains an authentic purpose throughout by focusing on the experience of running a race and the mental focus necessary to push through the pain during the race. There is clear evidence that the writing communicates adequately with the audience, and the organization and word choice indicate that the writing successfully meets the audience's needs. The writing conveys the writer's voice clearly throughout (e.g., "My Beatles magic was too much for him" and ". . . I felt the sharp pain of fatigue in my legs"). The writing provides depth of idea development relative to the purpose established and provides sufficient details and support. At times, readers see glimmers of reflective and insightful idea development, but overall, the writing demonstrates a level "3" for the idea development indicator. The writing effectively applies characteristics of personal writing.

3 Structure (3, 3, 3)

Though the final paragraph appears to be tacked on and extra, the writing demonstrates logical, coherent organization with an effective chronological structure. There are effective transitional elements demonstrated throughout the writing (e.g., "Then," "One mile into the race. . .," "Apparently," and "On your mark!"). The variety of sentence structure is particularly effective and in some cases, enhances meaning (e.g., "use of shorter sentences to reflect action and longer sentences to reflect observations of the action). However, the writing demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure overall.

3 Conventions (3, 3, 3)

Overall, the writing demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and correctness and acceptable word choice (e.g., "dulcet tones," "stomped," "rallied," "peripheral"). Like the subdomains of Content and Structure, the writing demonstrates glimmers of "4" level writing (e.g., some precise word choice), but maintains the level "3" cell descriptors overall.

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample during instruction to address such issues as:

- How the "tacked-on" conclusion lacks subtlety and does not add to the meaning for a reader. The message is implicit in the writing and doesn't require a statement of the lesson at the end. Teachers and students may discuss whether this ending detracts from the meaning of the writing.
- How the anchor papers are particularly helpful in determining the subdomain scores for this piece. Teachers may share the anchor papers in question to help students see the differences between the 3 and 4 levels.
- How the varied use of short and long sentences function, in places, to enhance meaning.

Portfolio Title: A Hard Day's Night
Transactive Entry Title: United We Stand

3 Content (3, 3, 3)

The writing establishes and maintains the authentic focused purpose of defending the importance of labor unions throughout. Overall, the writing indicates an awareness of audience's needs by including various details and support (e.g., "benefits," "higher pay," "reducing crime," "generating tax revenue"). There are several instances of insightful and analytical idea development, but overall, the writing sustains the "3" cell providing sufficient depth of idea development. The writing conveys an appropriate tone for this transactive genre.

3 Structure (3, 3, 3)

The writing demonstrates logical and coherent organization with effective transitional elements throughout (e.g., the use of introductory sentences in paragraphs as transitional elements). The writing employs a variety of sentence structures including some sentences that enhance meaning.

3 Conventions (3, 3, 3)

The writing demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and correctness with acceptable and effective word choice throughout (e.g., "Union detractors," "outsourced," "per-capita").

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample during instruction to address such issues as:

- How editorializing affects audience needs, especially when the writing does not address the opposing viewpoints in more depth.
- Documentation—integration of source material and in-text documentation; format of "References" page.
- How analysis functions within this piece--what is being broken down and analyzed and what conclusions are reached.

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Transactive Entry (with analytical or technical focus) Title:

(with analytical or technical Focus—12th only)

2 Content (2, 2, 3)

The writing establishes and maintains a focused purpose of evaluating Beowulf's qualities with those of a modern leader, but this focus lacks the level of authenticity expected within portfolio writing. While academic writing is fine for portfolio development, it should be authentic and not decrease student ownership and choice. This writing approaches authenticity by connecting the poem to modern leaders. While this student applied the reading of *Beowulf* to a topic of interest to readers today (modern leaders), the assignment clearly required the analysis of parts of the *Beowulf* epic to the exclusion of the needs of the established purpose and the needs of the audience. Because of the forced nature of the assignment, there is only some awareness of meeting the audience's needs evident in the writing. The intended audience for this piece is the teacher, indicating a writing-to-demonstrate learning activity that does not promote choice and ownership in writing for publication (the type of writing expected within the assessment portfolio). There are sufficient details to develop the ideas of the established purpose (e.g., military experience, lineage/family, respect).

3 Structure (3, 2, 3)

The writing demonstrates logical, coherent organization. There are some unclear transitions within paragraphs causing a jump between the Beowulf and the modern leader comparison (e.g., ". . . He [Beowulf] was born into a royal family and success was hereditary. His good name was no doubt an advantage to Beowulf during his era, and often times this would even help him become a leader today. George Bush is one of many presidents. . ."). Some ideas do not seem connected within paragraphs. Overall, the writing demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure.

3 Conventions (3, 3, 3)

The writing demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and correctness and acceptable word choice.

Instructional Implications

Teachers may use this sample during instruction to address issues such as these:

- How a writing-to-demonstrate learning assignment does not always lead to strong writing for publication; the assignment limits the student's performance in several indicators.
- Teachers and students may discuss how the writing could be improved and still incorporate the student's understanding of *Beowulf* (how to make the academic nature of the writing more authentic).
- Paragraph construction and the importance of transitions and transitional elements.